



EPA Activities in the Columbia River Basin

Transboundary Gas Group Meeting
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Stevenson, Washington

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Region 10



About EPA

- EPA is responsible for ensuring clean air, water and land
- Region 10's Role
 - Who We Are
 - Where We Are
 - What We Do
- Relationships w/ Our States, Tribes, & Other Agencies
- Relationships w/ Business, Special Interest, & Public Sectors



EPA is a Leader in Watershed Approaches

- Over 20 years of national experience in collaborative watershed efforts
 - Chesapeake Bay, National Estuary Program: Puget Sound, Tillamook Bay, Lower Columbia Estuary and others
- Partnerships – communities, agriculture, industry
- Tribal trust responsibility
- Strong technical expertise



EPA Committed to Columbia Basin as a Priority

GOAL

- To protect public health and
- Aid in the recovery of Pacific salmon

BY

- Reducing sources of contamination
- Improving water and habitat quality in or near waters of the Columbia River Basin.



EPA Actions to Improve Habitat and Water Quality

- Water Temperature and Salmon Recovery
- Columbia and Snake River Mainstem
- TMDLs and Subbasin Planning
- EPA Support to Key Columbia Watersheds and Subbasin Recovery Effort
- Support to Basin-wide Monitoring



EPA Actions to Improve Habitat and Water Quality

- Wetlands protection – Section 404
- NEPA reviews
- Forest practices with states and federal agencies
- Compliance issues – City of Portland
- State and tribal water quality standards – Washington, Idaho
- ESA consultation
- NPDES permits
- Accountability management



EPA Actions to Reduce Toxics

- Lake Roosevelt
- Reduce or eliminate new PCB loadings
- Follow-up to Columbia Basin Fish Contaminant Survey
- Portland Harbor Superfund clean-up
- Coeur d' Alene Basin restoration effort



Water Temperature and Salmon Recovery

- Water temperature is critical for salmon recovery
- April 2003 – Region 10 Temperature Guidance – ID, OR, and WA
- March 2004 – Oregon Water Quality Standards – national model for temperature
- Implement TMDLs in OR, WA and ID – important tools



Columbia and Snake Mainstem

- EPA does not support dam breaching in the Columbia/Snake Mainstem
- EPA has modeled the river without dams to better understand what can be done to improve water temperature
- Committed to work with state, federal agencies, tribal governments and others on what is achievable



TMDLs and Subbasin Planning

- TMDLs are Clean Water Act tools for water quality improvement
- States – ID, OR and WA are doing TMDLs, EPA approves math, state does implementation actions
- TMDLs can be important tools for subbasin recovery – identify what needs to be done to improve water quality



TMDLs

- Lower Columbia/Lower Snake TDG TMDLs
- Mid-Columbia TDG TMDL
- Columbia/Snake Mainstem Temperature TMDL
- Hells Canyon TMDL - joint effort of Idaho and Oregon - will provide framework for FERC relicensing and other decisions
- Upcoming Toxics TMDL - Lower Columbia



EPA Commitment to Key Columbia Watersheds

- EPA – long term commitment to Lower Columbia River Estuary – NEP
- EPA recognizes the critical importance of the estuary in salmon recovery
- EPA Watershed Initiative - support to watershed efforts – in 2003
 - additional \$700k to Lower Columbia Estuary
 - \$1 million to Clark Fork-Pend Oreille



Support to Basin-wide Monitoring

- EPA - active partner in the Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership (PNAMP)
- EPA – Corvallis and Region 10 bring a high level of experience/expertise to PNAMP
 - Sampling design; sharing data
 - Indicators
 - EPA funding of Columbia Basin monitoring efforts
- EPA committed to providing technical assistance and other support to Columbia Basin monitoring



Toxic Contamination

- July 2002 Columbia River Basin Fish Contaminant Survey
- 2003 - 47 dam inspections to I.D. possible PCB releases associated with hydroelectric sources
- Follow up sampling survey to I.D. potential sources and transport in Mid-Columbia in partnership with tribes and states
- Exploring future work with NOAA Fisheries on toxics and salmon



Lake Roosevelt

- Legacy pollution from Teck Cominco – Trail, B.C.
- Critical concern to Colville and Spokane Indian Tribes
- EPA initiated Preliminary Site Assessment and concluded that there is a metal contamination problem
- EPA in discussions with Canada through State Dept.
- EPA has begun next step - Remedial Investigation Feasibility Study



Conclusion

- EPA is committed to Columbia Basin restoration
- We look forward to working with you as we move forward on these important efforts